

I believe it's important to increase the end strength of the United States Army so it can remain engaged—[*applause*]. If this is a long struggle, now is the time to prepare this country and our military for this long struggle. It's important for our citizens to understand that the terrorists and extremists are as brutal an enemy as this country has ever faced. There are no rules of warfare. They don't—they will kill you in a minute in order to achieve an objective. And I know we're going to face difficulties as we take on this important duty and task, and so do you.

You know firsthand that—what it means to lose a comrade. My view is that it is important for us to succeed so that comrade would not have died in vain. It's important to leave behind a better world, as the sacrifices that all have made.

There is no doubt in my mind, we will prevail. It will require patience and determination. It will require our military to do what you have done every time this Government has asked of you. It will require the full resolve of not only this Government but future Governments that will be following this one. Every time this country has been tested, we've responded. As I said last night, we have defied the pessimists, and we will do so again in this first battle of the 21st century.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in Freedom Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Walter Wojdakowski, USA, commanding general, Fort Benning, who introduced the President; Mayor William J. Wetherington of Columbus, GA; Mayor Jeff Hardin of Phenix City, AL; Sgt. Maj. Douglas Greenway, USA, command sergeant major, U.S. Army Infantry Center; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; and Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq.

Proclamation 8099—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2007

January 11, 2007

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

On the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, Americans honor the memory of a man who stirred the conscience of a Nation. We also recommit ourselves to the dream to which Dr. King devoted his life—an America where the dignity of every person is respected; where people are judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character; and where the hope of a better tomorrow is in every neighborhood.

When Martin Luther King, Jr., came to our Nation's Capital in the summer of 1963, he came to inspire America and to call on our citizens to live up to the principles of our founding. His dream spread a message of hope, justice, and brotherhood that took hold in the hearts of men and women across our great land, and it continues to speak to millions here at home and around the world.

We honor Martin Luther King, Jr., and remember his strength of character and his leadership. We also remember the work that still remains. America has come a long way since Dr. King's time, yet our journey to justice is not complete. There is still a need for all Americans to hear the power and hope of Dr. King's enduring words so that we can hasten the day when his dream is made real. Last year, I was proud to sign the "Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006." This Act renewed the 1965 bill that reaffirmed our belief that all men are created equal, broke the segregationist lock on the ballot box, and helped bring an excluded community into the center of American democracy. Our Nation will continue to build on the legal equality championed by Dr. King and all the heroes of the civil rights movement, and we will continue our work to protect the promise of our Declaration and guarantee the rights of every citizen.

As we observe Dr. King's birthday, let us honor his legacy and go forward with confidence as a Nation united, committed to destroying discrimination, and dedicated to extending the full blessings of liberty and opportunity to all Americans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Monday, January 15, 2007, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this special day with appropriate civic, community, and service programs and activities in honor of Dr. King's life and legacy.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:33 a.m., January 12, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 16.

Proclamation 8100—Religious Freedom Day, 2007

January 11, 2007

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On Religious Freedom Day, we commemorate the passage of the 1786 Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, authored by Thomas Jefferson, and we celebrate the First Amendment's protection of religious freedom.

Across the centuries, people have come to America seeking to worship the Almighty freely. Today, our citizens profess many different faiths, and we welcome every religion. Yet people in many countries live without the freedom to worship as they choose and some face persecution for their beliefs. My Administration is working with our friends and allies around the globe to advance common values

and spread the blessings of liberty to every corner of the world. Freedom is a gift from the Almighty, written in the heart and soul of every man, woman, and child, and we must continue to promote the importance of religious freedom at home and abroad.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 2007, as Religious Freedom Day. I call on all Americans to reflect on the great blessing of religious liberty, endeavor to preserve this freedom for future generations, and commemorate this day with appropriate events and activities in their schools, places of worship, neighborhoods, and homes.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:33 a.m., January 12, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 16.

Statement on Signing the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006

January 12, 2007

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5946, the "Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006." The Act sets a firm deadline to end overfishing in America; contributes to replenishing America's fish stocks; strengthens enforcement of America's fishing laws; and implements international agreements on fishery management and the protection of polar bears.

The executive branch shall construe provisions of the Act that purport to direct or burden the conduct of negotiations by the executive branch with foreign governments or